

STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR



ROBERT L. EHRlich, JR.
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TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

June 17, 2004

VIA FACSIMILE

Fred Warren Bennett, Esquire
6301 Ivy Lane, Suite 504
Greenbelt, Maryland 20770-6337

Christopher M. Davis, Esquire
514 10th Street, N.W.
9th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20004

Re: Stephen Howard Oken

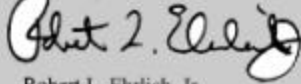
Gentlemen:

A death warrant was signed on April 26, 2004 by a Judge of the Circuit Court for Baltimore County, designating the period for the execution of Steven Oken to extend from June 14 through June 18, 2004. Through this moment, insofar as this office is aware, the Maryland and federal judiciaries have no longer stayed the proposed execution.

As you will recall, my perceived duty as Governor caused me to institute a deliberative process for the consideration of the sentence of death upon Steven Oken, similar to my continuing initiative for my objective individual consideration of all requests for "pardons and reprieves" that are brought before me. The process here included, among other endeavors: (1) my original invitation to you and other counsel for any new, unstated, or underestimated factors in the legal case; (2) preliminary briefings from my legal counsel; (3) analysis through my legal counsel of your Petition for Commutation of May 19, 2004; (4) a briefing on the protocol; (5) monitoring and review of the final court proceedings over the last few weeks; (6) as thoughtful decision-making as I am able to summon in this so tragic matter.

Upon full consideration of the materials and other presentations to me, it is my decision not to overrule the judicial determinations of the sentence of death imposed upon Steven Oken, and thus, pursuant to my authority as Governor of Maryland, the Petition for Commutation is hereby denied.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor

RLEJr/svh

cc: Gary E. Bair, Esquire, Solicitor General
Stephen E. Bailey, Esquire, Assistant State's Attorney